

OPR General Plan Guidelines

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Background

- Every city and county in California is required to have a General Plan- a long term vision for their future growth and development
- The Office of Planning and Research provides guidelines for cities and counties on general plans, including statutory and non-statutory requirement
- The last update to the General Plan Guidelines was in 2003, and there have been numerous new laws, requirements, resources, and research that affect general planning
- Incorporate State planning priorities with local needs
 - ▣ Promote infill, protect natural and working lands, develop in an efficient manner



Background

- A General Plan is a local governments long term blueprint for the community's vision of future growth
- Consistency is required between other planning activities and General Plan (specific plans, area plans, etc)

Required Elements

Land use

Open Space

Circulation

Noise

Housing

Safety

Conservation

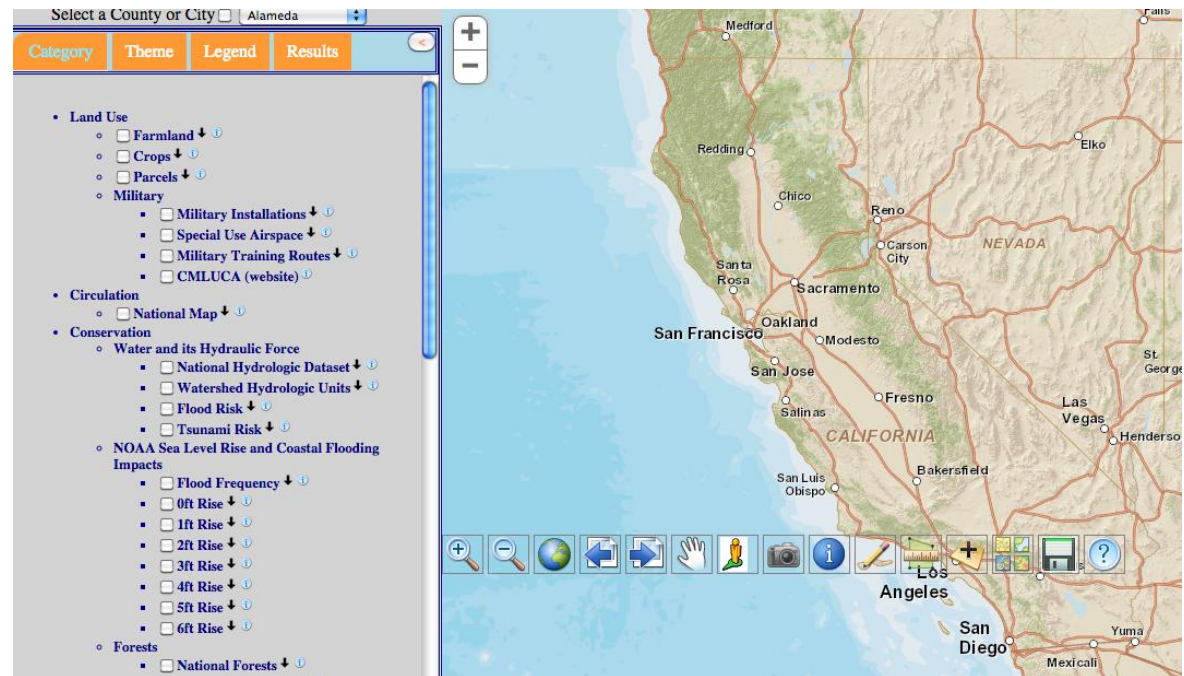
Air Quality (in San Joaquin Valley)

Environmental Justice (in areas with disadvantaged communities)



Vision for the GPG- *A Suite of Tools*

1. Policy Document: General Plan Guidelines
2. Online Data Mapping Tool
3. Updated Website



New Parts Throughout

- ☐ Completeness checklists for all statutory requirements
- ☐ Correlation charts for each element
- ☐ Recommended data tables for each element
- ☐ Sample policy language for each element
- ☐ Live links to external tools, resources, and information
- ☐ Internal links to related sections throughout text



Image by Urban Advantage, Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority



Introduction

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Introduction

Planning Healthy, Equitable, Resilient, and Economically Vibrant Places

*"By far the greatest and most admirable form of wisdom is that needed
to plan and beautify cities and human communities."*

—Socrates

The general plan is more than the legal underpinning for land use decisions; it is a vision about how a community will grow, reflecting community priorities and values while shaping the future. To assist local governments in preparing general plans and the public in participating in that process, the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) periodically revises guidelines for the preparation and content of local general plans (Gov. Code § 65040.2).

This 2017 edition of the General Plan Guidelines (GPG) contains significant changes to the previous General Plan Guidelines, which were last comprehensively updated in 2003. For mandatory and common optional elements of the general plan, the GPG sets out each statutory requirement in detail, provides OPR recommended policy language, and includes online links to city and county general plans that have adopted similar policies. Each chapter contains a sample selection of policies. Users can also click the links provided for more detailed policies and plans. All of the referenced policies as well as additional policies are compiled in Appendix A. For ease of use, the new GPG is text-searchable, and provides sample policy language for local governments to use or adapt. The update contains new resources and templates for cities and counties to use in considering themes, structures, and policies for their general plans, including new compendiums on infill development, renewable energy, and mitigation for conversion of agricultural land. As more resources become available, they will be added to these General Plan Guidelines. The new online platform will allow OPR to add updated text, links, and information directly to the GPG, and announce any additions through the GPG listserve and on the OPR website. The GPG is a resource to help planners accomplish their respective community's priorities and vision while meeting larger state goals, increasing community collaboration, and potentially improving competitiveness for funding opportunities.

As of 2015, more than half of local jurisdictions have general plans that are over 15 years old. Often, this is because the process of adopting a general plan has become too time-consuming and costly. In order to streamline the process and reduce cost, this comprehensive update of OPR's General Plan Guidelines (GPG) provides free online tools and resources, promotes increased use of online data, and includes templates, sample policies, and links to more information. The General Plan Mapping Tool draws data sets from multiple sources, allowing users to incorporate local, regional, and statewide data into local general plans without incurring outside costs. Local jurisdictions may pull from and modify provided policies and templates, analyze

- ❑ Many Leg updates
- ❑ Live links to tools
- ❑ Example Policies
- ❑ Data and data tool
- ❑ Coordination with other state work
 - Cal Adapt
 - Scoping Plan
- ❑ Statutory and extra

A Vision For Long-Range Planning

2

A Vision for Long-Range Planning

Designing Healthy, Equitable, Resilient, and Economically Vibrant Places

*"A city is not gauged by its length and width, but by the
broadness of its vision and the height of its dreams."*

—Herb Caen

Why the General Plan Matters

California state law requires each city and county to adopt a general plan "for the physical development of the county or city, and any land outside its boundaries which in the planning agency's judgment bears relation to its planning" (Gov. Code § 65900). The general plan expresses the community's development goals and embodies public policy relative to the distribution of future land uses, both public and private. The California Supreme Court has described general plans as the "charter to which [zoning] ordinance[s] must conform", but general plan extends far beyond zoning and land use (*Leshar Communications, Inc. v. City of Walnut Creek* (1990) 52 Cal.3d 531, 540).



Photo caption?

According to Litman's *Land Use Impact Costs of Transportation*, studies show that land use decisions affect transportation, electricity, and water demand. Each planning decision affects multiple objectives beyond the immediate outcomes. General plans benefit local communities by promoting better projects, streamlined processes, integrated planning, and improved access and use of available resources. Furthermore, local policies affect building decisions, energy efficiency, and the development of infrastructure.

A local general plan should start with a shared community vision that will help set priorities throughout the planning process, and inform decision makers about community values. Creating a community vision may include the following:

- Start with a vision
- Local plans and statewide goals
- GP basics

Community Engagement and Outreach

3

Community Engagement and Outreach

Designing Healthy, Equitable, Resilient, and Economically Vibrant Places

"Cities (and counties) have the capability of providing something for everybody, only because, and only when, they are created by everybody."

—Jane Jacobs

Introduction

Robust and inclusive community engagement is a vital component of drafting and updating a general plan. State law requires the planning agency to provide opportunities for the involvement of the community. Such involvement should include public agencies, public utility companies, community groups, and others through hearings or other appropriate methods (§ 65351). The law also requires that a jurisdiction make a diligent effort to include all economic groups when drafting, adopting and implementing its housing element (§ 65583(c)(8)). For the purposes of this chapter, the term "update" will refer to adoption of new general plans as well as amendments to existing plans.

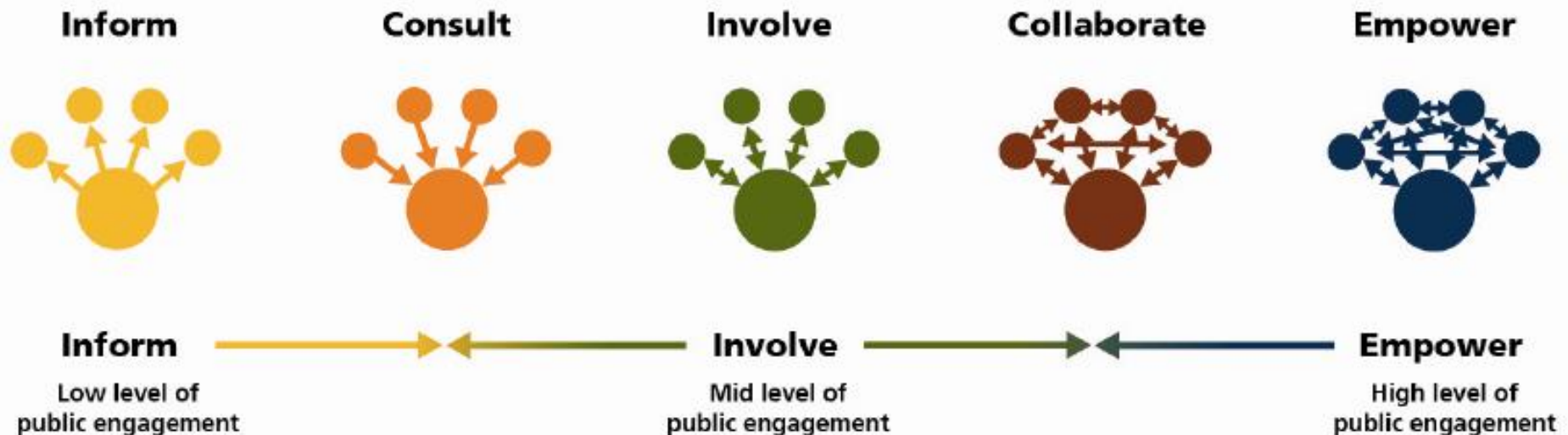
By law, cities and counties must hold at least two public hearings before adopting a general plan: one by the planning commission and another by the legislative body (either the city council or the board of supervisors) (§65353(a), §65355). Government Code section 65351 requires that during the preparation or amendment of a general plan, the planning agency must provide opportunities for community input through public hearings and any other means the planning agency deems appropriate. Specifically, Government Code section 65351 requires that the planning agency shall "provide opportunities for the involvement of citizens, California Native American tribes, public agencies, public utility companies, and civic, education, and other community groups." Government Code section 65357 requires that copies of the documents adopting or amending a general plan, including the diagrams and text, shall be made available to the public. The courts have found a general plan amendment invalid when it was not made available to the public (*City of Poway v. City of San Diego* (1991) 229 Cal.App. 3d 847, 861.) Most planning departments, however, conduct more than the minimal number of hearings. Many jurisdictions undertake extensive outreach that exceeds the minimum statutory requirements. The spectrum of community engagement ranges from informing and consulting the public to involving, collaborating, and ultimately empowering local communities.¹

- Design process from beginning
- Advisory boards and novel ways to integrate partners
- Culture and equity considerations
- Data
- Tools

Levels of Community Engagement

- Traditional planning engagement falls on the consult and involve spectrum.

- Principles:
 - Inclusion
 - Transparency
 - Democratic participation



Land Use

4

Land Use Element

Introduction

The most fundamental decisions in planning begin with land use: what to put where. Land use planning envisions the future of a city or county and interacts with all other elements of planning. At its best, the land use element will reflect the community's vision; promote thoughtful, equitable, and accessible distribution of different land uses, including residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural, and open space; and align well with other general plan elements. Planners can also use the land use element as a tool to improve [public health](#), reduce infrastructure costs, enhance [local economies](#), and address long-term environmental issues such as [climate change](#) and water resources.

The land use element can also help resolve conflicts and identify trade-offs in land use decisions. For example, increasing density may result in a higher population, but it can also help enhance water supply reliability, reduce long-term costs of infrastructure maintenance, improve water use efficiency, land conservation, housing and transit options, and equity. Designating "least-conflict" areas for solar development may increase energy independence and generate local economic benefits while also preserving valuable agricultural lands. Pursuing [urban infill](#) projects may require higher intensity development directed at a limited number of parcels varying in suitability, but infill may also allow for more accessible transit and walkability thus reducing vehicle miles traveled and subsequent greenhouse gas emissions. Identifying and resolving such issues in the land use element can result in development patterns that are predictable, coherent, and reflect community values.

Gov. Code § 65302 (a) A land use element that designates the proposed general distribution and general location and extent of the uses of the land for housing, business, industry, open space, including agriculture, natural resources, recreation, and enjoyment of scenic beauty, education, public buildings and grounds, solid and liquid waste disposal facilities, greenways as defined in Section 816.52 of the Civil Code and other categories of public and private uses of land. The location and designation of the extent of the uses of the land for public and private uses shall consider the identification of land and natural resources pursuant to paragraph (3) of subdivision (d). The land use element shall include a statement of the standards of population density and building intensity recommended for the various districts and other territory covered by the plan. The land use element shall identify and annually review those areas covered by the plan that are subject to flooding identified by flood plain mapping prepared by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) or the Department of Water Resources. The land use element shall also do both of the following:

- (1) Designate in a land use category that provides for timber production those parcels of real property zoned for timberland production pursuant to the California Timberland Productivity Act of 1982 (Chapter 6.7 (commencing with Section 51100) of Part 1 of Division 1 of Title 5).

- Expanded information on form-based codes
- Examples of land use maps and diagrams
- Expanded information on school siting
- Military Readiness
- New section on waste management
- Live links and examples

Circulation

4

Circulation Element

Introduction

The circulation element is not simply a transportation plan, but rather a strategy addressing infrastructure needs for the circulation of people, goods, energy, water, sewage, storm drainage, and communications. By [statute](#), the circulation element must correlate directly with the [land use](#) element, but also has direct relationships with other elements. The provisions of a circulation element affect a community's physical, social, and [economic](#) environment, as well as its [health](#). The passage of SB 1000 in 2016 requires local governments to address [environmental justice](#) considerations related to circulation—such as access to transportation systems, air quality related to transportation, delivery routes and transit options for nutritional food access, and promotion of physical activity—upon the next revision of two or more elements in their general plan after January 1, 2018.

Government Code Section 65302 (b)

- (1) A circulation element consisting of the general location and extent of existing and proposed major thoroughfares, transportation routes, terminals, any military airports and ports, and other local public utilities and facilities, all correlated with the land use element of the plan.
- (2) (A) Commencing January 1, 2011, upon any substantive revision of the circulation element, the legislative body shall modify the circulation element to plan for a balanced, multimodal transportation network that meets the needs of all users of streets, roads, and highways for safe and convenient travel in a manner that is suitable to the rural, suburban, or urban context of the general plan.
- (B) For purposes of this paragraph, “users of streets, roads, and highways” mean bicyclists, children, persons with disabilities, motorists, movers of commercial goods, pedestrians, users of public transportation, and seniors.

Transportation systems are essential to any city or county and its economy, and can be designed to enhance opportunity and improve equity. However, the implementation and maintenance of infrastructure and resources is costly, impacts the environment, and affects human health. Transportation planning in California is rapidly changing, driven by a number of key factors:

- An increasing focus on access to destinations (connectivity) rather than just mobility, and transportation solutions involving proximity that better accomplish livability and environmental goals

- ❑ Updated guidance on LOS and VMT, including new safety appendix
- ❑ Extended discussion on relationship to land use
- ❑ New section on considerations of trade-offs
- ❑ Increased discussion on parking, active transportation, and complete streets, with links to resources

Housing

4

Housing Element

Introduction

Providing adequate housing for all residents is a priority for cities and counties throughout California. The housing element implements the declaration of State law that “the availability of housing is a matter of vital statewide importance and the attainment of decent housing and a suitable living environment for all Californians is a priority of the highest order” ([Gov. § Code 65580](#)). Provisions in the housing element are more specific and directive than other elements, and contain detailed guidance and reviews. The law also provides the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) with unique authority over the housing element.

Housing element updates must be consistent with other general plan elements, including the [land use](#) element and diagrams. Integrating considerations of general plan goals and policies through the housing element and each update may improve efficiency by ensuring consistency. Additionally, incorporating a holistic view of the document will allow the housing element to complement other elements in addressing challenges such as [climate change](#) mitigation and adaptation, and working towards local goals, such as promoting [infill](#) development, Transit Oriented Developments, and [healthy, safe, and equitable communities](#).

Periodic updates assure that local governments “will prepare and implement housing elements...toward the attainment of the state housing goal” ([Gov. Code §65581](#)). The law requires that HCD review and certify the housing element and that local jurisdictions submit annual progress reports to HCD. The housing element must be revised and submitted periodically on a four, five, or eight year cycle, depending on various factors ([Gov. Code §65588](#)). See the [HCD's website](#) for a [schedule of statutory deadlines](#). Specific questions about update cycles and related housing element requirements should be directed to HCD and the [HCD website](#). These Guidelines provide a general overview of the housing element, with links to more detailed information. Because of the more precise requirements applicable to the housing element, users should consult the detailed requirements for each section (following the links provided), including specificity and timelines.

CORRELATIONS AMONG ELEMENTS

	Land Use	Circulation	Conservation	Open Space	Noise	Safety	EJ
Housing	■	■	■	■	■	■	■

■ Identified in statute ■ Closely related to statutory requirements

- Live links to HCD site by category
- New sections on housing and health, climate, and economic development
- Expanded discussion, examples, and links related to displacement and affordable housing

Conservation & Open Space



Image by Urban Advantage, Canopy

- ❑ Expanded links to examples and resources throughout
- ❑ New text boxes highlighting greenprints and daylighting waterways
- ❑ Expanded discussion on Tribal resources and coordination

Noise

4

Noise Element

Introduction

Noise surrounds us; it is a constant presence in everyday life. A noisy community can be an excellent indicator of a healthy community: the noise from busy shops, children playing, and public transportation are all signs of a thriving environment. Noise is often defined subjectively, surrounding busy transportation corridors, recreational areas, construction zones, and schools as unwanted sound, while welcomed when supporting the presence of activity in a commercial business area. In addition, some development goals, such as [infill](#), may create acceptably higher levels of noise. The purpose of the noise element is to ensure that a local planning area limits the exposure of the community to excessive noise levels in noise-sensitive areas and at noise-sensitive times of day.

In 1976, the Department of Health Services Office of Noise Control issued the first Noise Element Guidelines pursuant to [Health and Safety Code section 46050.1](#), followed shortly thereafter by a model noise ordinance.

Although the Office of Noise Control no longer exists, the principles that it developed are still valid and widely used. Its Noise Element Guidelines, which are in [appendix D](#), are an additional resource that local governments may consult in addition to this chapter to develop noise elements.

Government Code 65302(f):

- (1) A noise element that shall identify and appraise noise problems in the community. The noise element shall analyze and quantify, to the extent practicable, as determined by the legislative body, current and projected noise levels for all of the following sources:
 - (A) Highways and freeways.
 - (B) Primary arterials and major local streets.
 - (C) Passenger and freight online railroad operations and ground rapid transit systems.
 - (D) Commercial, general aviation, heliport, helistop, and military airport operations, aircraft overflights, jet engine test stands, and all other ground facilities and maintenance functions related to airport operation.
 - (E) Local industrial plants, including, but not limited to, railroad classification yards.
 - (F) Other ground stationary noise sources, including, but not limited to, military installations, identified by local agencies as contributing to the community noise environment.

- Live links to extended noise guidance
- Extended discussion on noise and infill
- Linked list of additional resources

Safety

4

Safety Element

Introduction

The goal of the safety element is to reduce the potential short and long-term risk of death, injuries, property damage, and economic and social dislocation resulting from fires, floods, droughts, earthquakes, landslides, climate change, and other hazards. Other locally relevant safety issues, such as airport land use, emergency response, hazardous materials spills, and crime reduction, may also be included. Some local jurisdictions have chosen to incorporate their hazardous waste management plans into their safety elements.

The safety element directly relates to topics also mandated in the (1) land use, (2) conservation, (3) environmental justice and (4) open-space elements, as development plans must adequately account for public safety considerations and open space for public health and ecological benefits often incorporate areas of increased hazard risk. The safety element must identify hazards and hazard abatement provisions to guide local decisions related to zoning, subdivisions, and entitlement permits. The safety element should also contain general hazard and risk reduction strategies complementary with those of the [Local Hazard Mitigation Plan \(LHMP\)](#). Ideally, the LHMP will be incorporated into the safety element as outlined below in accordance with provision of [Assembly Bill 2140, General Plans: Safety Element \(Hancock, 2006\)](#) (Gov. Code § 65302.6).

The recent introduction of climate risk to the discussion of the safety element, adds a focus on longer term preparation of a community for a changing climate. Policies in a safety element should identify hazards and emergency response priorities, as well as mitigation through avoidance of hazards by new projects and reduction of risk in developed areas. As California confronts mounting [climate change](#) impacts, local governments are now required, in accordance with [Senate Bill 379, Land Use: General Plan: Safety Element \(Jackson, 2015\)](#) to include a climate change vulnerability assessment, measures to address vulnerabilities, and comprehensive hazard mitigation and emergency response strategy as explained further in this section (Gov. Code § 65302(g)(4)). Policies may include methods of minimizing risks, as well as ways to minimize economic

Government Code 65302(g):

- (g) (1) A safety element for the protection of the community from any unreasonable risks associated with the effects of seismically induced surface rupture, ground shaking, ground failure, tsunami seiche, and dam failure; slope instability leading to mudslides and landslides; subsidence; liquefaction; and other seismic hazards identified pursuant to Chapter 7.8 (commencing with Section 2690) of Division 2 of the Public Resources Code, and other geologic hazards known to the

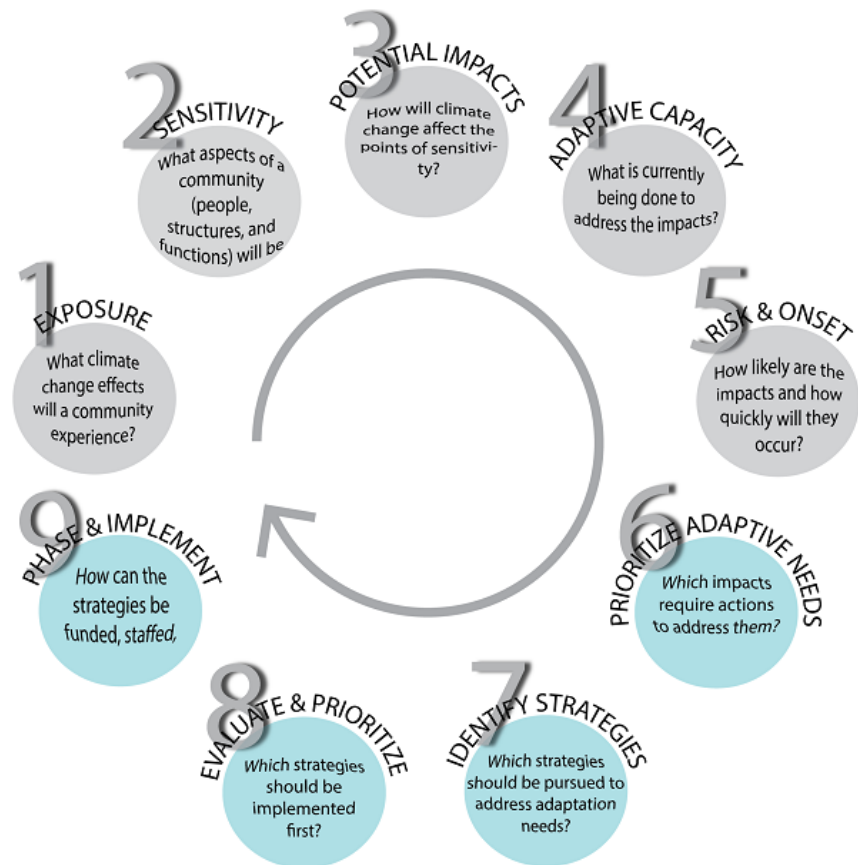
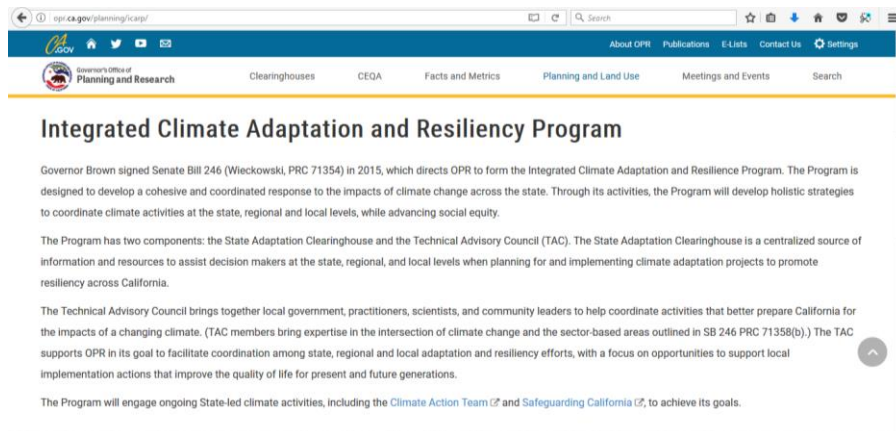
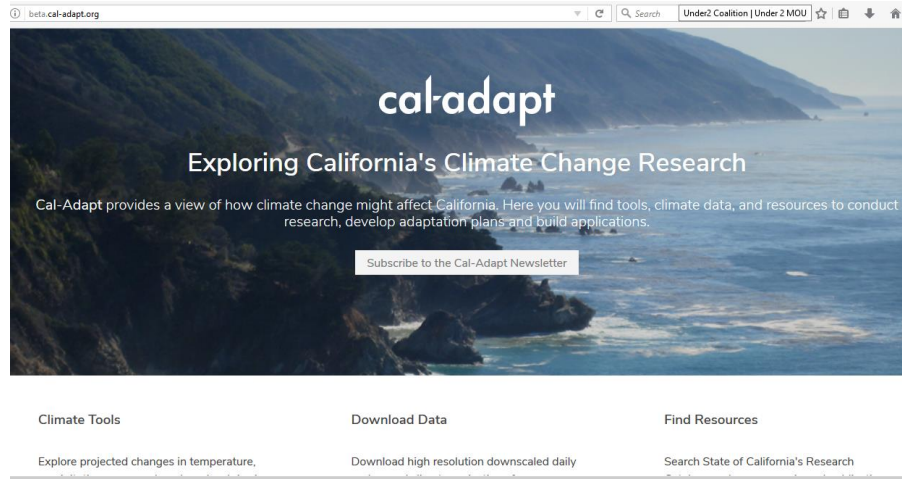
- ❑ Updates and incorporation of legislation and TAs
- ❑ Better coordination with LHMPs (AB2140)
- ❑ New section on Climate Adaptation and Resilience, as per SB 379 (2015)
- ❑ Internal and external links to related elements and considerations
- ❑ Direct coordination with other resources, including OES resources, Cal-Adapt, Adaptation Planning Guide, ICARP

Safety Element - Adaptation



- Climate change adaptation is now required in Safety Elements
 - ▣ Does not preclude incorporation in to other areas
 - ▣ Encourages cross-linkages and co-benefits
- Some distinct actions:
 - ▣ Review existing plans (gap analysis)
 - ▣ Assess community vulnerability
 - ▣ Create a set of goals, policies and objectives
 - ▣ Create a set of “feasible” implementation measures
 - ▣ Implement measures/align other plans

Safety Element - Adaptation



Environmental Justice

4

Environmental Justice Element

Introduction

Over 9 million Californians are exposed to and at risk from high pollution, according to the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment's Cal EnviroScreen tool. In addition to examining environmental hazards, Cal EnviroScreen and other tools look at assets that help protect communities from poor health. Legislation adopted in 2016, Senate Bill 1000, now requires both cities and counties that have disadvantaged communities to incorporate environmental justice (EJ) policies into their general plans, either in a separate EJ element or by integrating related goals, policies, and objectives throughout the other elements. This update, or revision if the local government already has EJ goals, policies, and objectives, must happen "upon the adoption or next revision of two or more elements concurrently on or after January 1, 2018."

Government Code Section 65302(h)

- (1) An environmental justice element, or related goals, policies, and objectives integrated in other elements, that identifies disadvantaged communities within the area covered by the general plan of the city, county, or city and county, if the city, county, or city and county has a disadvantaged community. The environmental justice element, or related environmental justice goals, policies, and objectives integrated in other elements, shall do all of the following:
 - (A) Identify objectives and policies to reduce the unique or compounded health risks in disadvantaged communities by means that include, but are not limited to, the reduction of pollution exposure, including the improvement of air quality, and the promotion of public facilities, food access, safe and sanitary homes, and physical activity.
 - (B) Identify objectives and policies to promote civil engagement in the public decisionmaking process.
 - (C) Identify objectives and policies that prioritize improvements and programs that address the needs of disadvantaged communities.
- (2) A city, county, or city and county subject to this subdivision shall adopt or review the environmental justice element, or the environmental justice goals, policies, and objectives in other elements, upon the adoption or next revision of two or more elements concurrently on or after January 1, 2018.
- (3) By adding this subdivision, the Legislature does not intend to require a city, county, or city and county to take any action prohibited by the United States Constitution or the California Constitution.

- Identify objectives and policies to reduce the unique or compounded health risks in disadvantaged communities by means that include but are not limited to:
 - Reducing pollution exposure, including improving air quality → near roadway siting
 - Promoting public facilities
 - Promoting food access
 - Promoting safe and sanitary homes
 - Promoting physical activity
- Identify objectives and policies to promote civil engagement in the public decision making process
- Identify objectives and policies that prioritize improvements and programs that address the needs of disadvantaged communities

SB 1000 (Leyva, 2016): General Plans: safety and environmental justice

- ❑ Requires cities and counties with any disadvantaged communities to incorporate environmental justice related goals, policies, and objectives into their general plans
- ❑ Can be a separate element or integrated into other elements
- ❑ Must happen upon adoption or revision of 2 or more elements on or after January 1, 2018



SB 1000 DAC Definition

(4) For purposes of this subdivision, the following terms shall apply:

- (A) “Disadvantaged communities” means an area identified by the California Environmental Protection Agency pursuant to Section 39711 of the Health and Safety Code or an area that is a low-income area that is disproportionately affected by environmental pollution and other hazards that can lead to negative health effects, exposure, or environmental degradation.
- (B) “Public facilities” includes public improvements, public services, and community amenities, as defined in subdivision (d) of Section 66000.
- (C) “Low-income area” means an area with household incomes at or below 80 percent of the statewide median income or with household incomes at or below the threshold designated as low income by the Department of Housing and Community Development’s list of state income limits adopted pursuant to Section 50093.



SB 1000 requirements

- (A) Identify objectives and policies to reduce the unique or compounded health risks in disadvantaged communities by means that include, but are not limited to, the reduction of pollution exposure, including the improvement of air quality, and the promotion of public facilities, food access, safe and sanitary homes, and physical activity.
- (B) Identify objectives and policies to promote civil engagement in the public decision-making process.
- (C) Identify objectives and policies that prioritize improvements and programs that address the needs of disadvantaged communities.



Air Quality

4

Air Quality

Introduction

Chronic exposure to air pollutants is a serious health risk to millions of California residents, particularly the young, elderly, and people with heart disease and respiratory problems. Safeguarding public health has been the primary focus of federal and state air quality legislation and activities for many years. Air pollution also impacts local economies by damaging agricultural crops, natural vegetation, buildings, and other exposed materials. In addition, the economic health of an area may be affected adversely if insufficient air quality improvement triggers more stringent federally mandated air pollution controls. Air pollution also can impair visibility and obscure views. Cities and counties should strive to reduce emissions for the benefit of both their own residents and those of other communities in their region and the state as a whole. Air quality can be greatly improved through a multi-prong approach.

Local jurisdictions have responsibility for land use planning and can also significantly affect the design, creation, and management of development and the local circulation system. While air pollution is a regional issue, local governments have an opportunity to address air quality issues through general plans, development ordinances, local circulation systems, transportation services, and other plans and programs. As such, they are uniquely positioned to contribute to the local air district's efforts to achieve and maintain compliance with state and federal air quality standards. Supporting mode shift through improved bicycle and pedestrian facilities and support for transit, building infrastructure for zero emission vehicles, reducing parking, and promoting infill development can help reduce emissions and improve air quality. Cities and counties within the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD) jurisdiction are required by state law to include air quality measures in their general plans. The SJVAPCD developed the *Air Quality Guidelines for General Plans* to assist these cities and counties in meeting these requirements. The document provides additional goals, policies, and programs for adoption in general plans that will reduce vehicle miles traveled and improve air quality. In addition to statutory requirements for air quality measures in the San Joaquin Valley, cities and counties that have identified disadvantaged communities, as defined by SB 1000, must also incorporate air quality into their general plans. For more information on the environmental justice requirements, see the EJ section. Regardless of statutory requirements, the benefits of adopting an air quality element or implementing air quality policies throughout a general plan are universal.

Government Code 65302.1(c):

The adoption of air quality amendments to a general plan to comply with the requirements of subdivision (d) shall include all of the following:

- (1) A report describing local air quality conditions including air quality monitoring data, emission inventories, lists of significant source categories, attainment status and designations, and applicable state and federal air quality plans and transportation plans.

- Divided into 2 sections, for SJV (required) and all other communities
- New focus on air quality in disadvantaged communities
- Extended section on considerations and mitigation strategies for air quality near high volume roadways



CARB's TECHNICAL ADVISORY: "STRATEGIES TO REDUCE AIR POLLUTION EXPOSURE NEAR HIGH- VOLUME ROADWAYS"

MAGGIE WITT

CALIFORNIA AIR RESOURCES BOARD, RESEARCH DIVISION

SEPTEMBER 25, 2017

OPR/SGC AT APA: BEST PRACTICES FOR STATE AND LOCAL IMPLEMENTATION

SESSION: GENERAL PLAN GUIDELINES UPDATE



What is the “Technical Advisory”?

- A guide intended to provide planners and other stakeholders with:
 - Options for strategies that can be selected based on site/project-specific context
 - Scientific basis and other considerations (tradeoffs, appropriate context, etc.)
- Technical supplement to the 2005 Land Use Handbook



The Technical Advisory and an accompanying fact sheet can be downloaded at: <https://www.arb.ca.gov/ch/landuse.htm>

Technical Advisory Strategies

Strategies that reduce traffic emissions

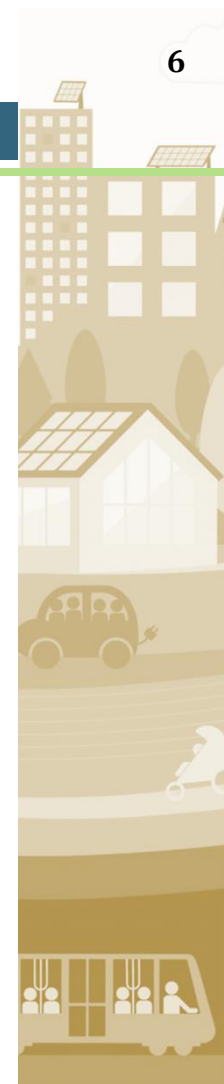
1. Speed reduction mechanisms, including roundabouts
2. Traffic signal management
3. Speed limit reductions on high-speed roadways (>55 mph)

Strategies that increase dispersion of traffic pollution

4. Design that promotes ventilation along street corridors
5. Solid barriers, such as sound walls
6. Vegetation for pollutant dispersion

Strategies that remove air pollution

7. Indoor high efficiency filtration (in buildings)



How should the Technical Advisory be Used?

- Intended audience:
 - Public health, air quality, and planning professionals and policy makers, & other key stakeholders
- Reference when:
 - Developing local policies/plans
 - Weighing options for a specific site

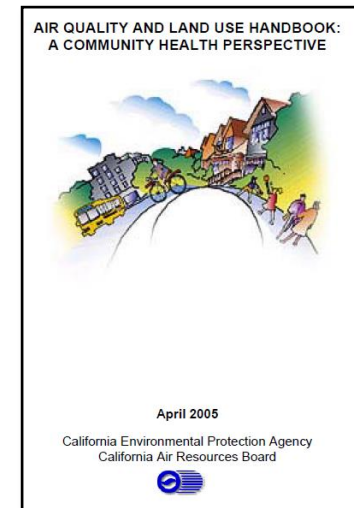


Why is it Needed?

1. Supplement/update ARB's Land Use Handbook

- ▣ Land Use Handbook recommendation: "Avoid siting new sensitive land uses within 500 feet of a freeways, urban roads with 100,000 vehicles/day, or rural roads with 50,000 vehicles/day."¹
- ▣ But, what to do for:
 - Existing development w/in 500'?
 - Development where 500' separation is impractical?
 - Communities where the busy roadway network is dense?

2. Identify ways for reducing exposure in existing and future infill areas



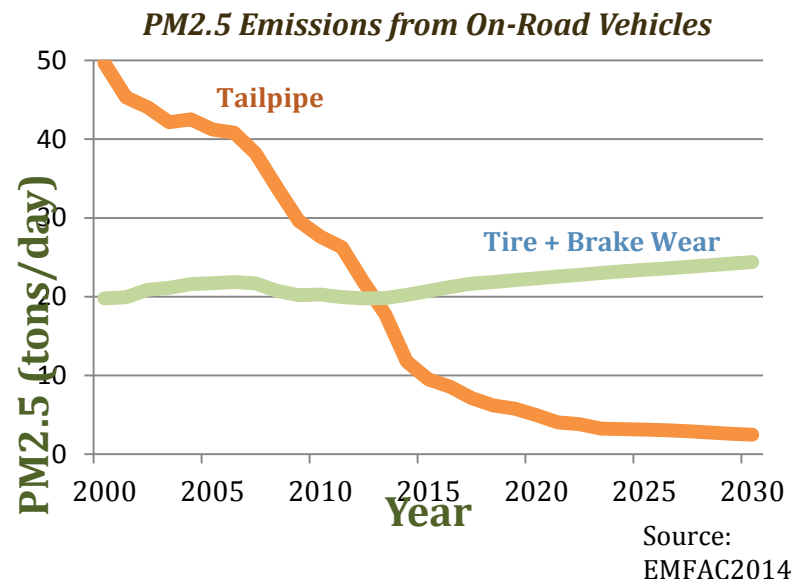
¹ <http://www.arb.ca.gov/ch/handbook.pdf>

Why is it Needed? (Cont.)

4

3. To provide near term options as near-roadway air quality improves over time

- State regulations, policies, plans are cleaning up the air, but some are phased-in, so full benefits may take time
- Non-tailpipe emissions (e.g., tire and brake wear) may continue to be an issue



How did CARB Identify Strategies?

- Comprehensive literature review: 2013-2016
- Criteria for inclusion:
 1. **Consistent findings from multiple studies** support the strategy as a means for reducing pollution concentrations, or emissions rates, or improving air flow to disperse pollutants.
 2. **Significant evidence of effective** pollutant concentration or exposure reductions.
 3. **Diversity in the study methods** supports consistent findings (such that strategies do not exclusively rely on one method of investigation).



Additional ARB Resources

- Air Quality & Land Use:
 - ▣ <https://www.arb.ca.gov/ch/landuse.htm>
- Public Health & the Built Environment:
 - ▣ <https://www.arb.ca.gov/research/vprp/vprp.htm>
- Searchable database of ARB-funded research:
 - ▣ <https://www.arb.ca.gov/research/research.htm>
- Additional information on filtration:
 - ▣ “Air Cleaning Devices for the Home: FAQs”:
<https://www.arb.ca.gov/research/indoor/acdsumm.pdf>
 - ▣ ARB-funded research on reducing in-home exposure to air pollution:
https://www.arb.ca.gov/research/single-project.php?row_id=65080



Thank You!

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Equitable & Resilient Communities

5

Equitable & Resilient Communities

Designing Healthy, Equitable, Resilient, and Economically Vibrant Places

"The future is not someplace we are going to, but a place we are creating.

The paths to it are not found, they are made."

—Jane Garvey

Introduction

Addressing social equity in policy decisions is vital for the economy, the health of the population, community well-being, and climate policies that support all residents. In addition to investments in infrastructure, services, and amenities, policies to support community engagement and to foster human capital in local communities are vital to creating more thriving, healthy, resilient, and equitable places. Additionally, there are significant demographic shifts taking place across California including more aging seniors, increasing ethnic diversity, and changing household structures.^{xxx, xxxi}

Cities, counties, regions, and states have increasingly been integrating equity principles into their policies and frameworks to increase opportunities for all to thrive. Disciplines such as transportation, housing, agriculture, energy, economic development, land use, health, and education are utilizing an equity framework to inform policy.^{xxx, xxx, xxx, xxxi} In the late 1960s, the urban planning equity movement recognized that through expanding choices and services to those with limited options, local jurisdictions could work towards improved planning outcomes and equity.^{xxxii} Equity is also one of the three key pillars in sustainable development and is recognized by the American Planning Association in its official policy on smart growth. Despite the growth and interest in advancing social equity and the recognition of its importance, one common definition has not emerged.^{xxxiii}

- Definitions of social equity
- Incorporating social equity
- Data, mapping, example local areas
- Resilience screen

Social equity definitions

The National Academy of Public Administration defines social equity as:

“The fair, just, and equitable management of all institutions serving the public directly or by contract; the fair, just and equitable distribution of public services and implementation of public policy; and the commitment to promote fairness, justice, and equity in the formation of public policy.

The American Planning Association defines social equity as:

"The expansion of opportunities for betterment that are available to those communities most in need, creating more choices for those who have few."

The California Planning Roundtable states that social equity:

“Ensures that all groups enjoy the benefits of a healthy and prosperous community, with access to housing, transportation, jobs and commerce. It enables a variety of businesses to flourish.”

Sources:

<http://www.napawash.org/fellows/standing-panels/social-equity-in-governance.html>

<https://planning.org/policy/guides/adopted/redevelopment.htm>

<http://reinventingthegeneralplan.org/principles/>

Healthy Communities

6

Healthy Communities

Designing Healthy, Equitable, Resilient, and Economically Vibrant Places

"I thought about it while riding my bicycle."

—Albert Einstein on the Theory of Relativity

Introduction

The health and well-being of California's residents are fundamental to their quality of life and economic vitality. Protection of the public health, safety, and welfare of residents is the legal basis for land use regulation. Homes, streets, work places, retail and services, schools, and neighborhoods influence community health in fundamental ways. Educational and employment opportunities may influence and improve health by ensuring access to the ingredients for a healthy life, including nourishing food, clean water, affordable places to live, safe places to walk, bike, and be active, and clean air indoors and out. Health is defined as complete state of physical, mental, and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease. Any reference to health in these guidelines refers broadly to health, including mental health. Health outcomes are not the same across all segments of the community. Research has shown that certain communities, often low-income and ethnic minorities, disproportionately suffer from poor health. Many factors contribute to these health disparities, including neighborhood and community conditions. Changing demographics across California create an imperative to address these disparities. Planning, programs, and policy to achieve health equity, through ensuring access to opportunities, will benefit the entire community. The policy priorities established in local general plans have tremendous potential to improve community health and make the healthy option the easier option for everyone.

Research shows that while access to health services is important, social, environmental, and economic factors also have a significant impact on health outcomes- the built environment is a key component of those factors. The built environment can affect all chronic conditions. Walkable neighborhoods promote physical activity. Other links between health and environment continue to emerge; for example, the impact of green space on mental and physical health. Many planning policies, such as Complete Streets, promote healthier outcomes by creating safer places to walk with improved connectivity to destinations. Adding a health lens to the planning process can lead to better health outcomes, and using data to inform policy decisions can

- Innovative Partnerships
- Health Considerations
 - In addition to EJ section
 - Health & Economics
 - A Changing Climate & Resilience
 - Social Connection & Safety
 - Health & Human Services
- Data & Policies

Community Benefit and Other Data



2016 Community Health Needs Assessment

Kaiser Foundation Hospital Riverside
License #250000327

To provide feedback about this Community Health Needs Assessment, email CHNA-communications@kp.org

Approved by KFHR Board of Directors
September 21, 2016



- **Community Health Needs Assessment:** This free web-based platform was created to assist community hospitals doing their needs assessment and provides census level data for health, economic, social, environmental, and behavioral data.
- **California Environmental Health Tracking Program:** This program is hosted by the CDPH. The data is more focused on environmental health impacts such as air quality, health, climate change related outcomes, water quality, and cancer prevalence.
- **Envirostor:** the Department of Toxic Substances Control hosts this program. It is a database that provides data in a GIS form to identify contaminated sites as well as facilities that deal with hazardous waste. This resource is important for remediation and siting.
- **CalEnviroscreen:** The Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) in the California Environmental Protection Agency created this online mapping tool. It is a tool that can help identify communities that are burdened with high levels of pollution and/or are highly vulnerable to its effects. The tool also contains socioeconomic data.
- **Healthy Communities Data and Indicators Project (HCI):** the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) hosts HCI. This indicator list provides evidence for links to health outcomes, data sources, and provides the ability to create maps.
- **California Health Interview Survey (CHIS):** The largest state health survey in the nation, CHIS is a random phone interview administered by the UCLA Center for Health Policy in conjunction with the State Department of Public Health and the Department of Health Care Services. CHIS recently added new functions, available at the neighborhood level in certain jurisdictions, on health behaviors and conditions of relevance to planning for healthy communities.

Economic Development

7

Economic Development and the General Plan

Designing Healthy, Equitable, Resilient, and Economically Vibrant Places

"World class communities come in all shapes and sizes, they are not determined by geography, and/or natural resources so much as by the mindset of their local leadership."

—Don Allen Holbrook, The Little Black Book of Economic Development

Introduction

The resilience of an economy both shapes and is shaped by its physical development. It strongly influences how a jurisdiction governs. Cities and counties may include a distinct economic development element, or highlight economic development as a primary theme or goal throughout their general plan. Most communities set forth goals of economic health and sustainable funding for public services for current and future residents, as part of support for a thriving business environment, job growth and retention, and, as appropriate, community revitalization.

CORRELATIONS BETWEEN ELEMENTS

	Land Use	Circulation	Housing	Conservation	Open Space	Safety	Noise	EJ
Economic Development	■	■	■	■	■	■		■

■ Identified in statute ■ Closely related to statutory requirements

Decisions regarding **land use** and **circulation** can promote businesses and increase property values⁴⁴⁹. Planning effective transportation access to centers of employment, education, and services can help a city or county build and maintain a strong economy. Ensuring an appropriate jobs-housing balance provides residents with nearby employment choices. And fostering public health will have a direct effect on improvements in labor productivity and increased personal income⁴⁵⁰.

- Entirely new section on economic development
- Discussions on economic development and businesses, employment, displacement, healthy communities, and climate

Climate Change

8

Climate
Change

Designing Healthy, Equitable, Resilient, and Economically Vibrant Places

"California, as it does in many areas, must show the way. We must demonstrate that reducing carbon is compatible with an abundant economy and human well-being. So far, we have been able to do that."

—Governor Jerry Brown

Introduction

The impacts of climate change pose an immediate and growing threat to California's economy, environment, and to public health. Cities and counties will continue to experience [effects of climate change](#) in various ways, including increased likelihood of droughts, flooding, wildfires, heat waves and severe weather. California communities need to respond to climate change both through policies that promote adaptation and resilience and by significantly reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. For requirements related to climate adaptation please see the [Safety Element](#).

While climate change is global, the effects and responses occur substantially at the local level, and impacts and policies will affect the ways cities and counties function in almost every aspect. Cities and counties have the authority to reduce (GHG) emissions, particularly those associated with land use and development, and to incorporate resilience and adaptation strategies into planning. For example, the interplay of general plans and [CEQA](#) requirements is particularly critical in evaluation of GHG emissions and mitigation. For this reason, specific guidance is provided on how to create a plan to reduce GHG emissions that meets the goals of both CEQA and general plans. To this end, this chapter summarizes how a general plan or climate action plan can be consistent with [CEQA Guidelines section 15183.5 \(b\)](#), entitled Plans for the Reduction of Greenhouse Gas Emissions. This chapter can also be used to update older plans so they comply with the criteria in [Section 15183.5 \(b\)](#) and associated CEQA streamline opportunities.

- Guidance on CEQA streamlining for GHG emissions
- Step by step guidance on emissions inventory Supporting information and resources on adaptation planning
- List of additional resources with live links

Climate Change – Plans to Reduce GHGs



- § 15183.5(b)(1)(A) of the CEQA Guidelines recognizes a wide variety of planning efforts (CAP, General Plans, etc)
- A Plan to address GHGs should contain at least the following components:
 - ▣ Inventory using accepted Protocols
 - ▣ Set a target in line with State targets
 - ▣ Forecasting
 - ▣ Establish reduction measures
 - ▣ Monitor and amend
 - ▣ Adopt in a public process

Implementation and CEQA



Image by Urban Advantage, SANDAG

- Working with other agencies
- Sections on zoning, codes, and other implementation tools
- Sections on financing tools for infrastructure
- Expanded guidance from Coastal Commission for coastal areas
- Detailed guidance on CEQA process for general plans

OPR Guidelines - Data

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SAMPLE OF OPR RECOMMENDED DATA FOR CONSIDERATION IN ANALYSIS OF THIS ELEMENT

The health data resources listed above have some of the recommended data below. Other more granular data might be available through the local department of public health, the local air district, the metropolitan planning organization, water district, or business association.

Intent of Analysis	Recommended Data
Life expectancy can be a good proxy for general health and well-being in the community. Many low-income areas suffer from early mortality and morbidity.	Life Expectancy at Birth
Asthma can be worsened by environmental triggers such as poor air quality, poor housing quality, and climate change, examining baseline conditions can help inform siting decisions.	Asthma (Prevalence, ED visits, hospitalizations)
Obesity is caused by many factors, but lack of access to healthy foods and physical activity are significant contributors. Examining baseline status can help with policy decisions around active transportation, recreation priorities, and food system policies.	Obesity (child and adult) prevalence
These diseases, also caused by many factors, are often associated with obesity. Examining baseline status can help with policy decisions around active transportation, recreation priorities, and food system policies.	Secondary diseases from obesity (high blood pressure, high cholesterol, heart disease, type 2 diabetes prevalence)
Many accidents involving pedestrians and bicycles could be improved through infrastructure, design, and signage. Examining a baseline can inform policy and planning for transit routes, active transportation, and safety.	Unintentional injury such as pedestrian and bicycle accidents
Walk trips is a behavior that benefits health and is influenced by the environment. Examining a baseline number can help inform active transportation and for climate change and resiliency policy.	Walk trips per capita
Children walking, biking, or rolling to school is a behavior that can improve health and is influenced by the environmental conditions such as distance to school and safety. Examining the baseline condition can inform policy priorities around active transportation, active design, school siting, and housing siting.	Percent of children who walk, bike, roll to school

GPG Example Policies and Appendix

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OPR Recommended Policies

As is the case throughout the entire general plan, many of the policies have relation to other elements. This is particularly true with the health-related policies, as shown in the recommended policies below. These policies are an example of recommended policies adopted by varying jurisdictions, to be modified and used as appropriate. A larger list of recommended policies can be found [here](#).

Policy	Example	Relation to other elements
Promote uses that address daily needs within the City and close to neighborhoods, reducing the need for residents to travel long distances to access jobs, goods and services.	City of Arvin	Circulation, land use, housing, economic development, equitable and resilient communities, climate change
Encourage development that reduces VMT, decreases distances between jobs and housing, reduces traffic impacts, and improves housing affordability.	County of Sonoma	Economic development, equitable and resilient communities
Plan for Climate Change. Plan for the public health implications of climate change, including disease and temperature effects.	County of Marin	climate change, EJ, equitable and resilient communities, land use
Encourage the development of complete neighborhoods that provide for the basic needs of daily life and for the health, safety, and mental well-being of residents.	County of Riverside	Circulation, land use, equitable and resilient communities
Bicycling and Walking. Implement policies and programs that encourage bicycling and walking as alternatives to driving and as a means of increasing levels of physical activity. Encourage bicycle and pedestrian safety through education and incentive programs.	City of El Monte	Circulation, land use, housing, economic development, climate change, EJ, equitable and resilient communities
Invest in community planning efforts that aim to reverse trends of community deterioration and blight which lead toward the decline of personal and property safety within the County's community districts.	County of Kings	economic development, equitable and resilient communities, land use
The attraction and retention of high quality grocery stores and other healthy food purveyors should be pursued as an economic development strategy for the City. Healthy food outlets include full-service grocery stores, regularly-held farmer's markets, fruit and vegetable markets, and convenience stores or corner stores that sell a significant proportion of healthy food.	The City of South Gate	economic development, EJ, equitable and resilient communities, land use

Next Steps

- ☐ Workshops around State
- ☐ Meetings, research, outreach and coordination to:
 - ☐ Update Environmental Justice section
 - ☐ Add additional data suggestions and links
 - ☐ Add guidance on water related issues
- ☐ Annual or bi-annual assessment and update to guidelines



Thank you

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